

Basic Self-Awareness

Martine Nida-Rümelin

University of Fribourg, Switzerland

A number of contemporary philosophers use the term 'mineness' or subjective character to refer to a 'feature of conscious experience' which consists in the fact that the content experienced is given to a subject (or is there 'for' a subject). Mineness, as it is used in contemporary discussion, is a further feature of experiences (alongside with qualitative character) the subject is aware of. Thereby, mineness is understood as phenomenally given, as part of what is experienced. I will try to uncover a number of fundamental mistakes that, in my view, are associated with this notion of mineness. One of them is the presupposition that 'awareness' in the subject's awareness of phenomenal content (e.g. of the red apple the subjects perceives) and 'awareness' in the subject's awareness of its own experience (e.g. its perception) is of the same kind. This mistake in the work of contemporary authors can be found already in the writings of Brentano (or so I will argue). An alternative understanding of awareness of one's own experiences and the kind of basic self-awareness it involves will be proposed.